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ABSTRACT

Examined in this booklet concerning law enforcement agencies and minority recruitment efforts undertaken by them are: (1) official hurdles which must be surmounted by minority applicants, (2) minority recruitment programs being conducted in five major cities, and (3) recruitment practices of state police and fire departments. Recommendations for conducting more successful campaigns include: (1) Enact new policies which commit city and state police forces to continue affirmative hiring goals and practices, (2) Compile ethnic statistics so that evaluative assessments can be made from time to time, (3) Plan recruitment campaigns in cooperation with ghetto community leaders, (4) Make more efforts to change the negative images minorities have of police to positive ones, (5) Make a census analysis of the target community before recruitment is begun, (6) Plan recruitment activities more carefully, and (7) Eliminate some of the more marginal eligibility qualifications included on the basic test. (SN)

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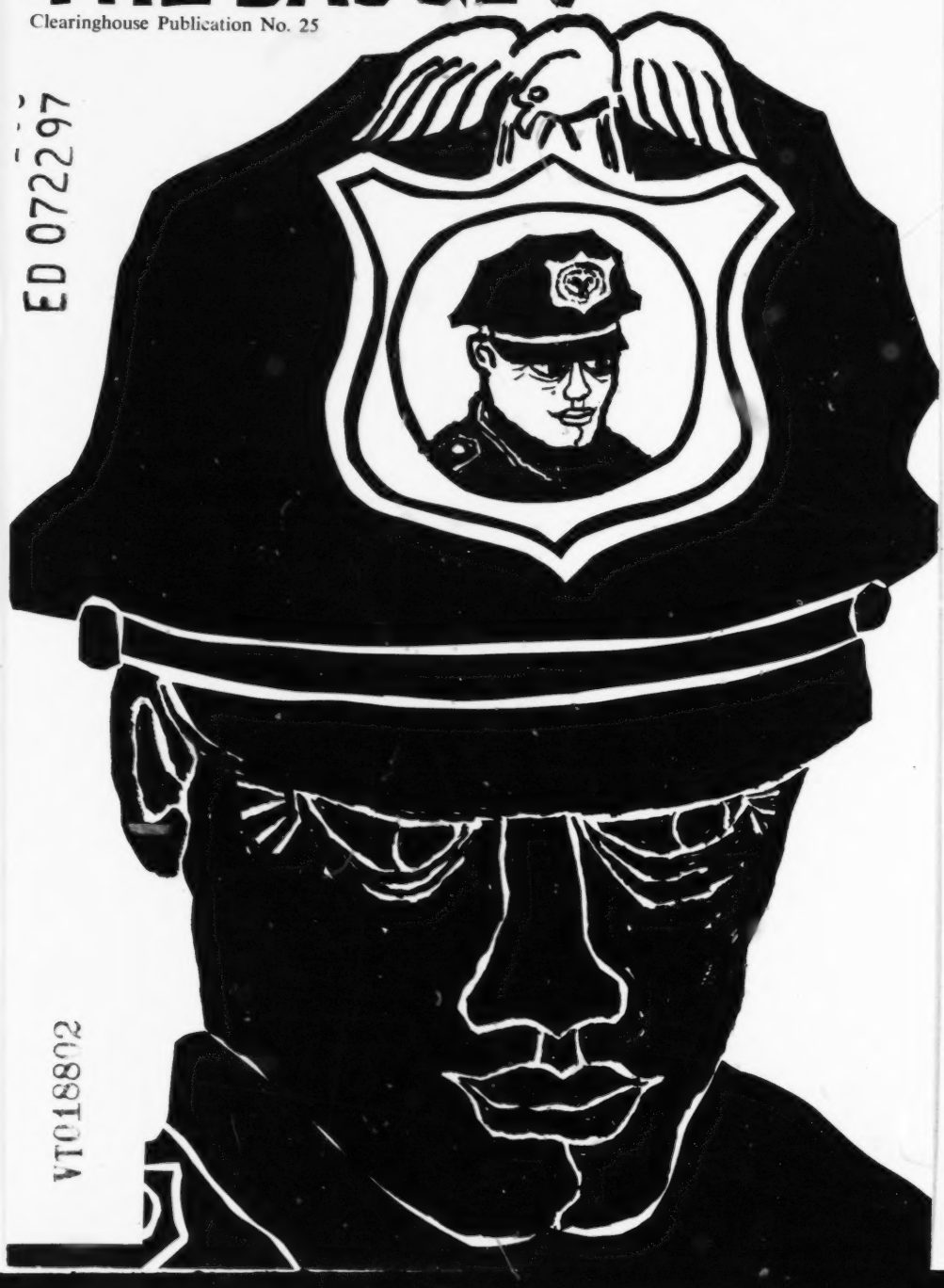

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WHO WILL WEAR THE BADGE?

A Report of the United States Commission on Civil Rights

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A STUDY OF
MINORITY RECRUITMENT EFFORTS IN PROTECTIVE SERVICES

By Richard J. Margolis

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

This report examines the barriers to minority recruitment by police departments and fire departments throughout the United States, and explores a variety of local efforts to surmount these barriers. The purpose is to encourage minority recruitment programs that work—a goal that is easy to state but, as we shall see, hard to accomplish.

We have focused on police departments in five cities*—Detroit, Miami, Washington, Denver, and Waterloo, Iowa—and also on State police organizations in Michigan, California, and Connecticut. In addition, we have examined hiring practices by fire departments serving some of these same cities.

The cities were selected in part for their geographic distribution, but more importantly for their recent efforts in minority recruitment. The hope is that other local governments facing similar challenges will profit from an analysis of these minority recruitment programs.

Policemen are busy people, and I wish to express my gratitude to the many we interviewed—blacks, browns, and whites, chiefs, and recruits—for lending us their time and knowledge. My thanks also go to countless local officials and community leaders for their helpful insights and advice. Lastly, I wish to thank my wife, Diane, who assisted me in many of the interviews and in the preparation of this report.

Richard J. Margolis
Georgetown, Connecticut
April 28, 1970

* A sixth city, Los Angeles, was originally included, but was eventually dropped when we were unable to obtain pertinent statistics on the results of the L.A. Police Department's minority recruitment program.

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PREFACE

If government is to be *for* all the people, it must be *by* all the people. This basic precept underlies a 1969 Commission report on Equal Opportunity in State and Local Government Employment report, "For All the People . . . By All the People." The report found that members of minority groups frequently are denied access to responsible State and local government jobs and often are totally excluded from employment except in the most menial positions. In no department were the barriers and obstacles to equal employment opportunity greater than in the departments concerned with public safety: the police and fire departments.

In all of the cities and States surveyed by the Commission, the proportion of uniformed policemen and firemen who were black was substantially below their proportion in the population as a whole. Some cities and States had only recently begun to hire blacks as policemen and firemen. Segregation in assignments was still a common practice.

Not a single black was on several of the State police forces in the metropolitan areas surveyed by the Commission, although each area contained a sizable black population. In both police and fire departments, blacks were conspicuously absent from positions above the level of patrolman or fireman.

The Commission also found that the most aggressive recruitment efforts in State and local government, including the recruitment of minorities, have recently been undertaken by municipal police departments. Despite their efforts, the results have usually been meager.

Several factors have been advanced to explain this lack of success. Among them are unduly strict selection criteria, growing distrust and hostility toward the police in minority communities, and continued discriminatory treatment of minority group persons on the job.

Nevertheless, a number of reasons make employment of minorities in these jobs a matter of utmost importance.

Demand for more numbers of protective units is among the foremost of these. In every central city studied by the Commission, the police force was under its authorized strength. It is estimated that, nationwide, there is a need for 50,000 new policemen each year. The number of firemen hired annually is much smaller, but will probably increase as rapidly growing suburban areas

recognize their need for more professional fire fighting units.

The financial rewards for these jobs is compelling. A comparison of the salaries of police and fire jobs with other occupations requiring more formal education is instructive. In each of the cities included in the Commission's study, policemen and firemen had about the same or even a higher beginning salary and frequently a higher maximum salary than many other government employees, e.g., social case workers. In addition, these jobs maintain salaries that are higher than those for many jobs traditionally filled by blacks and other minorities. There is every indication that present salaries will increase.

Not of least importance is the fact that the very stresses and tensions between the protective services and minorities, which hinder recruitment, are not likely to be resolved until these services are more representative of the minority community.

It should be noted that Federal funds are now available to assist communities in this effort. Under the Law Enforcement Assistance Act, the Department of Justice is authorized to make grants for "the recruiting of law enforcement personnel and the training of personnel in law enforcement." Some localities already have begun to use these grants specifically for the purpose of recruiting and training minority police officers.

Despite the obstacles to minority recruitment, we believe that there are minorities in every city and State who would accept employment as policemen and firemen and who would meet qualifications relevant to good performance on the job. We believe, also, that there are many state and local officials with a genuine interest in recruiting police and firemen from minority groups and in improving police-community relations.

In order to focus attention on the underrepresentation of minority groups in State and local protective services and to suggest effective techniques for overcoming this situation, the Commission has undertaken a limited study of the matter. Its purpose is to determine what selected governments are doing affirmatively to recruit minority groups in police and fire departments. The study and the report which follows were prepared by Richard J. Margolis for the United States Commission on Civil Rights.

INTRODUCTION

Recently a black policeman in Detroit, highly placed and highly skilled, recalled how he almost did not get on the police force back in 1947: "I'd been working for the telephone company collecting from coin boxes, but there was no future in that and my wife was pregnant so I decided to apply for a job on the police force.

"Well, I passed all the tests and all the interviews, but then they sent me a letter saying I'd been rejected. They told me I had tuberculosis. You know, when I got that letter my wife was in the hospital having our first baby, and I remember just sitting alone in our dark living room thinking I was going to die. But after a while I had another thought: 'What the hell—I'm not even coughing.'"

Later, with the help of a set of chest x-rays taken by his own physician, he forced the police department to accept his application. "That's how I became a cop," he recalls, "with separate but equal x-rays."

It would have been relatively easy in those days immediately following the Second World War for police and fire departments to recruit minority members, just as it would have been relatively easy for colleges to recruit black students, for industry to hire black personnel, and for builders to sell to black home-buyers. Many returning black veterans, having risked their lives for America, were ready to stake their futures on the American system and to share in both its hazards and its opportunities. They were ready, but the white majority kept pretending that Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Mexican Americans, and American Indians had social tuberculosis.

Today that policy of raw discrimination and overt exclusion is generally discredited. Yet the legacy lingers, and the two unequal societies it has created continue to grow farther apart and ever more hostile. The two societies are not simply moral abstractions—they are authentic, physical entities and, thanks to the Nation's meticulously organized system of housing segregation, they can be readily located in every city in America. Many Americans have grown accustomed to this peculiar racial geography; they have come to see the two societies as fixed, eternal points on the American landscape, placed there by divine decree and separated forever by rivers, railroad tracks, and superhighways. Few white people nowadays venture across these barriers—unless they happen to be policemen or firemen.

In the ideal world—the world of the schoolchild's textbook—the policeman might well be a natural bridge between the two societies. Isn't he pledged to uphold the law? And isn't the law for everyone, for the weak as well as the strong, for blacks as well as whites? If one is lost, shouldn't one ask a policeman for help?

In Washington, D.C. we interviewed black children whose view of policemen corresponded to these textbook maxims. "A policeman is nice to good people and shoots bad people," an 8-year-old boy told us. Another child said: "Sometimes a policeman makes a mistake and puts the wrong person in jail. But then they find out about it in court." Yet these children knew their older brothers and sisters entertained an entirely different opinion of the police. "My big brother," said one of the children, "he calls 'em pigs. When he sees one coming, he runs."

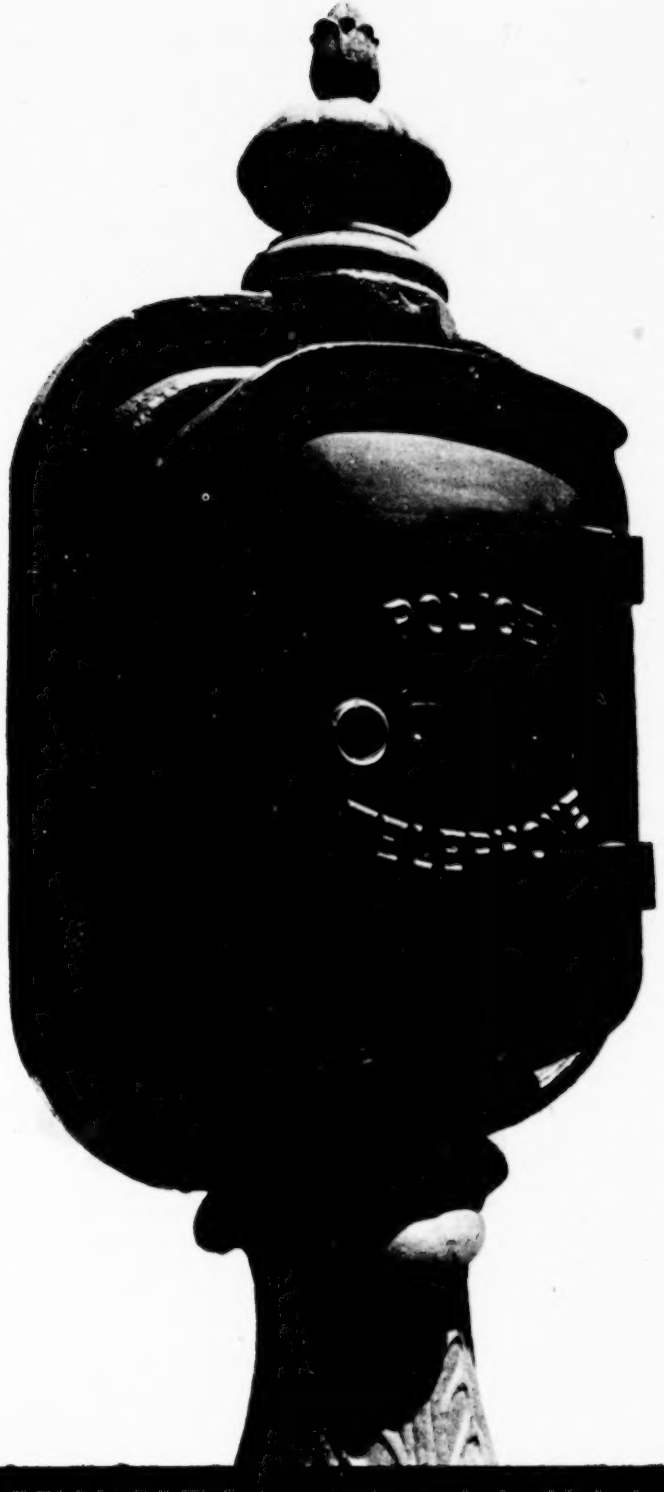
If the ghetto riots of the late sixties taught us anything, it was that our big-city police departments were in deep ethnic trouble. Black militants were comparing them to an occupying army—a kind of white colonial battalion in every urban ghetto—and there was enough truth in the assertion both to startle and irritate white America. More moderate civil rights spokesmen meanwhile were demanding that the police put their house in order. They called for an end to police brutality and harassment in the ghetto, for better police protection of ghetto residents, and for new hiring policies aimed at recruiting minority members into police departments.

In response, many police officials began to reshape their thinking, if not their policies. There was a flurry of benevolent activity: new "community relations" programs between policemen and ghetto residents; sensitivity sessions aimed both at exposing and expunging racism among white policemen; and elaborate recruitment programs designed ostensibly to attract minority group members to police careers.

This report will examine some of the recruitment programs. The purpose is to try to discover how this great and essential task—that of integrating our most disaffected and oppressed citizens into society's system of law enforcement—can best be accomplished. At present, the task remains largely undone, even in those cities and States where commitments have been made and programs mounted. Many of the recruitment programs are studies in frustration; some are little better than public relations schemes aimed at improving a department's image without upsetting its old patterns. Other programs have been sincere in their intentions but unrealistic in their expectations.

However, in at least two cities we visited—Washington and Detroit—some progress has been made in minority recruitment, which suggests that the task may be difficult but by no means impossible.

We shall begin with an examination of some of the hurdles which nearly all police and fire department applicants must overcome, paying particular attention to the effects these hurdles have on minority member applicants. We shall then turn to a city-by-city description of police recruitment programs and problems; this section will be followed by an examination of recruitment practices in local fire departments and State police organizations. Finally, we shall draw conclusions and make recommendations which, we trust, will be useful to cities and States seeking solutions to the mysteries of minority recruitment.


POLICE

The Hurdles

It is not easy to become a policeman or a fireman. The standards are stiff, the tests are difficult, and the screening is thorough. Fire departments usually enjoy the blessings of long applicant waiting lists and very few openings. Police departments, on the other hand, are frequently forced to recruit aggressively in efforts to fulfill ever-expanding quotas. The dramatic growth of police departments in recent years has created a superb opportunity for minority recruitment, and many local police forces have accepted the challenge. Yet the results of their minority recruitment programs have been disappointing. Few black or Spanish-speaking police applicants have been able to surmount the many official hurdles which stand between them and police careers.

To Apply . . .

Eligibility standards for applicants vary somewhat from city to city, but generally they remain within a narrow range. What follows is a discussion of each of these standards as they pertain to minority recruitment.

Age Requirement: The range is from 20 to 36, but more typically from 21 to 31. Several police departments, including Denver's, are considering dropping the age minimum to 19, in an effort to recruit minority youths directly out of high school . . . "before they get into trouble or join the militants." As for the other end of the age spectrum, there has been a general drift upward. But since the policy in most departments is to make each new policeman an "outside man" as opposed to a "desk man," the age ceiling necessarily remains low. As a black policeman in Detroit puts it: "Who wants to chase a thief when your legs are aching?" On the other hand, many police recruiters feel that the higher the age ceiling, the better the chances of recruiting minority group members. The over 30 black man may be less militant, less hostile to the police, and more career-oriented than his younger brother.

Height Requirements: the range is from 5'6" to 6'10"; more typically from 5'8" to 6'7". Height minimums have long been a source of irritation to the Oriental and Spanish-speaking communities and, as a result, the requirements have inched downward in many cities. Nevertheless, State police departments and fire departments frequently set 5'10" minimums and often defend them on "practical grounds". For example, the California State Highway Patrol insists that short policemen are more likely to inspire resistance from persons they are

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trying to arrest; and firemen speak of the sheer physical bulk required of firemen who must carry ladders and other heavy equipment. Yet neither of these interesting rationales appears to make much sense. Surely a well-trained small man can take care of himself in a tight situation, or strike an attitude that will forestall violence. As for the firemen, Mexico City now uses aluminum ladders, a convenient alternative to discriminatory height standards.

What appears to be at stake here are images—the policeman's or fireman's image of himself as a tall and handsome officer, a kind of John Wayne in uniform; and the Mexican American's image of the department as an exclusive organization that neither needs him nor wants him.

Education: The applicant must be a high school graduate or hold an equivalent degree. This, of course, eliminates a disproportionately large number of minority group members.

If the applicant meets these requirements—along with a few others, such as U.S. citizenship, 1-year State residency [in some States], and good eyesight—he is ready for the real hurdles. But right here it should be noted that *many eligible blacks and Mexican Americans drop out before clearing a single hurdle.* They either don't return the application or don't show up for the written test. A black policeman in Detroit suggests why. "You see, they look at all the steps they're going to have to go through—the test, the character investigation, all that stuff—and they figure the system is rigged. The schools made them scared of tests. And maybe there's something in their past, like a police record, that they don't want us to find out about. So they drop out. They're tired of being rejected."

There may be additional reasons why minority group members often fail to follow through with their applications. For example:

> "Man, I took one look at that application and figured it would take me a week just to get through it."—a black applicant in Detroit.
>
> "I don't know—when I walked into that police station I got bad vibrations."—a Mexican American applicant in Denver.
>
> "The cops behind the counter were whispering to each other and laughing a lot. I felt kind of funny inside."—a black applicant in Denver.
>
> "A guy doesn't want to admit to his friends that he flunked the test and couldn't get in. They'd just laugh and say 'We told you so.' "—a black policeman in Connecticut.

It would be risky to generalize from these comments, but it seems a safe bet that many minority member applicants approach the police department with considerable uncertainty and trepidation. Their initial meeting with the police recruiter is often crucial: either it confirms their fears—in which case they flee forever—or it gives them hope that they will be accepted. Many police departments have met this problem by hiring black recruiters, sending recruit-mobiles into the ghetto, and shortening their application forms. These measures have probably helped; yet the sad truth is that most blacks and Spanish Americans who choose to stay in the race end by being rejected anyway. In other words, the early dropout may not get the worm, but at least he doesn't get the worry.

To Pass . . .

Here, in roughly descending order of importance, are the reasons why most minority group applicants are rejected:

The written test is by far the most dangerous hurdle. In some cities fewer than 10 percent of black applicants are able to surmount it. The white success rate is usually considerably higher. Typically, the examination is a shortened version of the Army General Classification Test (AGCT) or of any of several other standard intelligence tests—e.g., Otis-Quick, the California Short Form, and the Wonderlic Personnel Test. The tests usually include problems in logic, arithmetic, vocabulary, and spatial relationships. Police and civil service officials tend to equate test results with a man's "native intelligence", the implication being that persons who flunk the test are intellectually inadequate.

Yet test standards are often arbitrary and, in some cases, discriminatory. "The usual multiple-choice written test is one of the most discriminatory instruments against culturally disadvantaged people," notes Dr. Felix Lopez, an authority on manpower training. "A better indication of success on the job is the actual personal accomplishment of the applicant—what he did with what he was given. A high school graduate from a white, middle class background might be an underachiever, while the completion of high school by a Negro youth from the ghetto might be a real expression of drive and motivation."

In addition, many of the test questions seem to stack the deck against anyone who has grown up in an urban ghetto. Here are some examples:

Does R.S.V.P. mean "reply not necessary"?

High yields of food crops per acre accelerate _____ of soil nutrients.

A. depletion B. erosion C. cultivation D. fertilization E. conservation

The opposite of natural is _____

superficial strange injurious artificial foreign

A club that accepts only very rich members is said to be _____ _____

snobbish exclusive conservative Republican un-American

It seems clear that a black slum dweller might answer these questions differently from a middle class white man. Partly as a result of these differences thousands of black and Spanish-speaking would-be policemen are being rejected. The upshot is that the minority community sees the tests as a slick, exclusionary gimmick with trick questions, while the police see it as proof that most ghetto men are not qualified to become policemen. The test has become a sacred cow; most attempts to render it more fair to minorities are shouted down by the rank-and-file as a "lowering of standards".

Yet standards are precisely what the tests lack, since few of them have been specifically validated against police skills; that is, the tests have not been shown to predict an applicant's performance as a policeman. Indeed, one wonders what these tests do predict. AGCT test "norms", for example, were established by use of a sample that included neither women or blacks. "This research offers little, if any, value to present-day consumers of the AGCT," notes Dr. Bert A. Goldman in "Mental Measurements Yearbook" (Sixth Edition).

Police departments that equate fairer tests with lower standards are, in effect, torpedoing minority recruitment efforts. Few local governments have squarely faced this harsh fact, but there are signs that some are questioning their old assumptions. Detroit's police department is seeking the research funds that would lead to a new, nonbiased test (the test Detroit is now using, the Wonderlic, is said to be among the most culturally biased); Washington is writing a new test; and the California Personnel Division is making a study of the kinds of questions which minority members frequently get wrong, with an eye to eliminating those questions from standard tests. These are small, tentative steps on the long road to justice in police hiring practices. But tests, as we shall see, are not the only hurdles minority applicants confront.

The background investigation in some cities tends to eliminate a higher proportion of blacks and Mexican Americans than whites, although the discrepancy is not large. As noted before, many blacks voluntarily drop out of the race before a background check can be made. In checking the applicant's background, investigators look for such personal problems as bad debts, illegitimate children, arrest and conviction records, driving violations, and unstable employment records. These are valid hiring concerns for a police department but, unfortunately, they encompass precisely those background weaknesses which turn up more frequently in ghetto communities.

In addition, there is a whole series of vague middle class standards which investigators apply. In home interviews with the applicant, for example, the investigator takes note of the prospect's clothes and appearance, his tone of voice, the condition of his home, and the attitude of his wife. (The wife is expected to be enthusiastic about her husband's police career.) Here for example, are some typical comments from Detroit police investigators:

"Subject said he had no hobbies."

"His mother took an active part in the precedings." (sic)

"Applicant was very slow in holding a conversation."

"Subject's house was neat, clean, well-maintained."

"Applicant's wife does not object to his being a policeman."

"Applicant appears financially sound."

Police officials, in defending these interviews, often cite the need for thoroughness: "We can't afford to take chances on applicants. We want to find out as much as we can." Yet it is hard to see how such ingenuous attempts at sizing up the applicants can be of any use to the police. At the same time, they provide endless opportunities for prejudiced evaluations (unintentional or otherwise), particularly since nearly all police investigators are white and middle class. Such arbitrary values as neatness, enthusiasm, and overall personal pleasingness can vary depending on one's life situation. The crowded ghetto family, living in two or three rooms, may be compelled to endure a clutter that is beneath police standards; and the black man who holds two low-paying jobs in order to support his family may be too weary to impress the police investigator.

A more serious element in the background investigations—and a greater bar to minority group members—is the applicant's police records. Here the picture grows murky. Some States automatically eliminate applicants with felony conviction records. Many police departments overlook juvenile records, providing these records are free of assault convictions. In general, police departments are

willing to forgive and forget minor crimes committed in the relatively dim past. As a Miami police personnel officer remarked: "I don't think there's a single applicant who hasn't stolen something in his life."

At the same time, a long arrest record—even if devoid of convictions—is viewed as suspicious, if not automatically disqualifying. The police, of course, are forced into this position by their own denials of a double standard in law enforcement; that is, if they insist that blacks generally get arrested for the best of reasons, then they must also insist that arrest records impair an applicant's chances.

The same holds true for driving violations. Few policemen would admit publicly what a Detroit lieutenant conceded to a visitor privately: "I've been on the force long enough to know that a colored man in a car is going to get stopped a lot more often than a white man." The lieutenant was explaining why the Detroit police department had recently liberalized its hiring standards by increasing the allowable number of moving violations. A few other police departments have made similar concessions, but in no case do the changes approach the need. There are doubtless thousands of black men who, having been frequently and unfairly arrested by individual policemen, are consequently deemed unfit for service on the police force.

In sum, then, police background and character investigations do nothing to open up opportunities for minority member applicants and, in some instances, they may act as a discriminatory bar to employment. Perhaps more important, the vague and frequently irrelevant criteria used in some cases create possibilities for discrimination where none need exist; and they generate more suspicion and distrust in minority communities, discouraging prospective applicants from taking the long plunge.

The oral interview is usually conducted by a three-man board consisting, in some cases, of policemen, and in other cases of both policemen and citizens-at-large. There is no evidence available in the cities and States being considered in this report that oral interviews are racially discriminatory. On the other hand, there is a strong current of opinion in the ghetto communities that oral interviews are precisely that. Most police departments have met these suspicions by adding at least one black man to the interview board. In one city, for example, police ask leading Negro citizens to volunteer for a stint on the interview board. No doubt this helps to allay suspicion, but some of the younger and more militant blacks claim that the black interviewer is nearly always an "Uncle Tom" minister or businessman, and that he is likely to be rougher on black applicants than on whites. Police personnel officials confirm at least a portion of the claim. "We get our Negro interviewers from the respectable element of the community," one of them said. "You know, they can be stricter with their own people than we can." One black applicant complained that the black interviewer kept calling him 'boy'.

Nevertheless, from the standpoint of police-community relations, almost any black interviewer is better than none. Witness Denver: there the oral interview board, supervised by the Civil Service Commission, remains all-white, as both black and Chicano leaders are quick to point out. "I'm not saying they discriminate," says a black civil rights leader. "But I am saying that not many young men from the ghetto are going to relate well to three old men who are white."

The oral interview does not eliminate many applicants. What board members look for, generally, is a well-met, well-spoken person who will not, by his demeanor or performance, embarrass the police department. There is a fairly wide latitude here, but not so wide that it includes militants. And in Miami and Denver, according to black policemen, it does not include people who wear their hair Afro-style.

The psychology test is used in some cities, as is the *polygraph*, or lie detector, test. In both cases the police claim to be looking for signs of over-aggressiveness, sadism, and other traits which everyone agrees policemen should not possess. These tests are nearly always an invasion of a man's privacy, but they are seldom an instrument of discrimination. In fact, in Miami, Detroit, and elsewhere they are used to ferret out racists. Affirma answers to such questions as: "Do you believe that some races are inferio, to others?" do not enhance the chances of an applicant, be he white or black. In the Denver polygraph interview, the wrong answer to the query: "Would you ride in the same patrol car with a Negro policeman?" is grounds for automatic rejection.

The medical examination has a long history of spurious uses in the interests of prejudice, as suggested by the story of the Detroit policeman who, back in 1947, was falsely informed he had tuberculosis. But in most cities that is ancient history, and incidents of raw discrimination in medical examinations are rare. (One such rarity may have occurred recently in Miami, when a black veteran, who had served in Vietnam as a member of the military police, was rejected by the Miami Police Department on the grounds that one of his legs was one-half inch shorter than the other one. When the applicant lodged a formal compliant, the decision was reversed).

What bothers some observers about police department medical examinations is—in the words of a police personnel official in Washington, D.C.—"the built-in-anti-urban bias of the health standards." In Washington, for example, applicants are rejected for hay fever, asthma, and other chronic respiratory troubles. These ailments have been found to occur with disproportionate frequency in urban ghettos. Recently three black Vietnam veterans were rejected by police doctors in Washington on the grounds that they suffered from hay fever. "Well, how the hell can you live in Washington," asked an irate personnel officer, "without getting hay fever?"

No one, of course, wants a sickly police force, and no one would suggest that essential medical standards be diluted or that police departments admit applicants who are physically unfit for service. Surprisingly, though, the official rationale for stern health standards—sterner, that is, than might be expected—is not medical but financial. Doctors say they are saving taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars in liabilities and early retirements by rejecting people with potentially bad backs or weak lungs.

But recruitment of competent policemen is also expensive—especially if the search must be pursued ever further from home base. Medical standards which prevent urban residents from joining their local police forces may be penny-wise, but personnel-foolish. Surely any big-city police force committed to affirmative minority recruitment should take a hard look at the costs—both financial and social—of a too-stringent medical policy.

If the black man manages to leap all these hurdles—and he rarely does—he may nevertheless be rejected, and for reasons over which he has little control. For example, if he has never learned how to drive—and many ghetto residents never have—he will get no farther than reading an application blank. Similarly, if he has never learned how to swim, he cannot be a policeman in Miami or in a number of other cities where swimming is felt to be a necessary police skill. Niether of these small handicaps would seem to be beyond solving: police training academies, which new recruits must attend for from 12 to 16 weeks, could easily include swimming and driving in their curricula. [The Michigan State Police Department does teach swimming]. Such modest reform could be an effective gesture of good faith directed at the minority community and would cost very little. Surely it takes no longer to teach a man to swim or drive than it does to teach him to shoot a gun.

The police training academy is the next-to-last step on the way to becoming a permanent member of the force. If the recruit gets through the academy he is usually on probation for a year, after which he becomes a full-fledged officer.

There is some evidence that minority group members flunk out of the academies in a higher proportion than whites. If so, it is not surprising. The black recruit is often the only black in his class. He suddenly finds himself in a para-military white world of spit-and-polish and strict discipline. In most academies he will search in vain for a black teacher or counselor or for anyone who will understand his life in the ghetto.

In State police academies the isolation is all the more shattering because recruits are barracked there and are not, as a rule, permitted to go home during the entire training period. (In any case, they may be hundreds of miles from home.) "We don't seem to be able to attract Negroes from the ghetto," notes a Michigan State police personnel official. "I don't think they feel secure outside their own community. The few Negro recruits we manage to get have lived and grown up with white people. You might say they're already integrated."

Before the black recruit enters the academy he is told, in effect, to look white. The recruit, notes a typical police academy manual, "is expected to have a short military type haircut without long sideburns, mustache or beard." Nothing he sees or hears during his academy stint disabuses him of this original impression. On the academy reception room walls there are usually pictures of past graduating classes, of former commanders, and chiefs. Nearly all are white.

During the next 12 weeks he will be given, typically, 50 hours in firearms training, 18 hours in first aid, 12 hours in criminal law, 7 hours in boxing, and 8 hours in human relations (it used to be 4). "The Human Relations," recalls one white recruit, "was the gut course. They had outside speakers come in and talk about brotherhood. We could relax."

The stringent discipline and the whirlwind routine are hard on everyone, but they are especially hard on the black recruit with no one to talk to. "You got to have a black man there telling him how he's doing," says Lt. Leroy Smith, who is black and in charge of the Miami Police Department's personnel division. The lieutenant tells of a black recruit who was flunking his tests on the rifle range. Smith visited the academy one day and got the recruit to practice on the range. In less than an hour his score improved dramatically. "I

can't explain it," says Smith, "but somehow my being there gave him confidence. That's why I keep asking at the academy how the brothers are doing. If there's any problem, I get out there fast." But a few months ago Smith was horrified to learn that three black recruits had flunked out. No one at the academy had warned him.

Academy trainess are required to take dozens of written tests and examinations, and the grades they get either make or break them. Not surprisingly, the grades a recruit earns at the academy correlate well with his grade in the "intelligence" test he took as an applicant. This suggests that the written test for applicants predicts how a man will perform at the academy—a helpful guide, perhaps, in the training process, but of no help, necessarily, in predicting on-the-job performance. In short, neither the original applicants' test nor the many subsequent tests given by the academy have been shown to be of strict relevance to essential police functions. For example, it would seem obvious that today's policeman is called upon to use his "human relations" skills more frequently than his "firearms" skills. Yet the amounts of training he is given in each imply precisely the opposite priorities.

Thus the curriculum design, with its heavy emphasis on written tests, psychological pressures, and white life-style norms, puts an undue burden on black and Mexican American recruits while failing to provide results that would justify that burden: namely, policemen pertinently and demonstrably trained for the job they must perform.

Most of the hurdles that the black man or Spanish American must scale to become a policeman are, strictly speaking, no higher than those confronting the white applicant. Yet given the special burdens which the minority member applicant carries into the race, the hurdles are virtually unnegotiable. The written tests, the character investigations, the medical examinations all combine to fulfill the minority applicant's most saturnine expectations—namely, that he has been made the victim of an elaborate white put-on, a system that recruits him with one hand and rejects him with the other.

The question that police departments and municipal governments must soon answer is whether or not the complex and frequently meaningless gauntlet they have constructed, which all applicants must run and which only a handful of blacks and browns survive, is worth the trouble. Does a prospect's getting over the barriers accurately foreshadow competent on-the-job performance? If not, what can be done to streamline—*not lower*—the standards so that they more reasonably relate to a policeman's duties and at the same time become acceptable to the minority community? The next section of this report, which deals with police minority recruitment programs in five cities, may suggest some answers.

Minority Recruitment Programs: Five Cities in Search of An Answer

The pattern of special police recruitment campaigns, aimed at minority members, does not vary markedly from city to city. Typically, the campaign begins on a note of optimism, sustained by the characteristically American assumption that if the "product"—i.e., a police career—is properly "pitched", black men and Spanish Americans will buy it, Advertising in newspapers and on television thus becomes a primary instrument of recruitment. In addition, "recruitmobiles" equipped with loud speakers start rolling through the ghetto; new recruiting offices are opened in minority neighborhoods; black policemen are taken off their beats and transferred to "Personnel"; special recruitment brochures, displaying pictures of black policemen, are printed and distributed. In some cities, there are related efforts aimed at healing—or at least bandaging —old conflicts between the police and the minority community. Police officials make speeches at black schools and churches; officers are asked to attend seminars on race relations; sensitivity training sessions are hastily organized (and, as often as not, soon abandoned.)

These measure often create an illusion of success: minority members do apply for police positions in relatively greater numbers. Yet most of the new applicants never succeed in becoming policemen. Moreover, the supply of minority applicants seems limited and, over the long haul, prone to dry up. Just why these problems occur, and what can be done to prevent them from occurring in the future, is one of the major concerns of this part of the report.

Because local minority recruitment programs tend to be similar in most respects, we shall not attempt to give full, repetitive coverage of each of the programs in the five cities we visited; instead we shall focus on the one or two features in each city which we consider paramount.

Detroit

"Avery, your job is to find the blacks."—orders given in 1967 to Lt. Avery Jackson, head of minority recruitment.

Detroit's police minority recruitment efforts suffer from a long history of mistrust between the police department and the black community. The mistrust spills over to blacks already on the police force. In theory, they might supply considerable recruiting power in the ghetto; in practice, most of them remain skeptical and unprepared to join the recruitment effort.

The police force has 491 blacks, about 10 percent of the total force of 5,056 men. Three years ago the black proportion was 4 percent; by 1975 officials

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hope it will be 25 percent. Estimates are that more than half the people now living in Detroit are black.

The first minority recruitment program began in 1967 with an advertising campaign sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce and put together by the Campbell-Ewald Advertising Agency. The campaign featured billboards, radio and television ads, and frequest appearances by Bill Cosby. The theme was: "There aren't enough big men to go around."

The slogan turned out to be self-fulfilling. Only about one in every 25 blacks who responded was "big" enough to meet the police department's qualifications. Nevertheless, a number of blacks did make the grade, and the black percentage began to creep upward. The biggest barrier to black recruitment seems to be the written test and, while no one on the force is eager to defend the test, no one has been able to come up with a decent substitute. According to Richard J. Caretti, a psychologist in the police department, it would cost Detroit $50,000 to accomplish the research needed to write a bias-free test. Considering the gains in minority recruitment which would result, $50,000 seems a small price to pay.

Despite testing problems and a consequent sluggish rate of increase in the proportion of black recruits, one gets the impression that most Detroit police personnel officials are trying hard to get more blacks on the police force. A permanent recruiting headquarters has been established in the all-black Tenth Precinct; more blacks have been added to the recruitment staff; and a few concessions have been made in liberalizing the qualifications—bad debts, for example, are no longer immediate grounds for rejection.

On the other hand, the department has no clear recruitment policy, no way of defining or reaching its most likely prospects. Recruitmobiles park randomly in front of pool halls, unemployment offices, factory gates, or campus buildings. There is no agreement within the department on where to find black recruits.

Since many black policemen continue to entertain doubts about the sincerity of their white colleagues, they make no effort to bring in additional blacks. "Our own cops can be our best recruiters," says a white personnel official, "but they can also be our worst knockers."

Black policemen point out that the Detroit police force has a long history of racism which cannot easily be expunged. In 1960, the predominantly white policeman's association voted to raise $25,000 to be used in defense of any member whose opposition to integration endangered his job. In 1953, a black lieutenant recalls, there were 2 5active black integrationists on the force. All but two, he says "have either retired or been eased out. You know—they'd keep drawing lousy shifts, or they wouldn't get promotions they deserved. Things like that."

Even now, according to the blacks, black policemen do not get promoted as frequently as white policemen. They point out that only 33 out of 491 blacks on the force hold rank (including one deputy inspector, three uniformed inspectors, and four lieutenants). In short: "It's still rough to be a black cop." (Promotions depend in part on the grades one gets in various written tests. The same old bugaboo.)

What all this seems to add up to is a wait-and-see policy on the part of both the black policemen and the black community. "We are ready to help on

recruitment," say Frank Blount, one of the department's four black lieutenants who has been on the force 15 years. "Just show us a sign." It is not clear what might constitute a sign, but certainly it would have something to do with the way police recruiters approach black community leaders. There are more than 300 block clubs in the Tenth Precinct, as well as dozens of community centers, churches, and civic organizations. A vigorous recruitment program would doubtless have to begin by seeking the cooperation of such groups.

Waterloo

"Well, they certainly can't fault us on tolerance; we have three colored policemen."

—a white policeman

Waterloo is by far the smallest of the cities that will be considered in this report, yet it suffers from nearly all the racial and social problems that plague larger cities. And the problems in Waterloo seem no easier to solve than they do in Miami or Detroit, merely easier to grasp.

Waterloo has a population of 80,000, 10 percent of which is black. The three blacks on Waterloo's 124-manpolice force make up less than 3 percent of the total force, yet that white policeman who cited their presence as proof positive of Waterloo's success in minority recruitment spoke without irony. His view is typical: there is a widespread assumption in the white community that the police department has done just about all that can be expected in the way of black recruitment. "We've reached a plateau," says Police Chief Robert Wright. "I don't see any way of getting better results."

The failure of Waterloo's police force to recruit blacks reflects the larger failure of Waterloo's white community to squarely face its deep and enduring racial conflicts. Like so many other cities, Waterloo's recruitment efforts began in the wake of a ghetto riot in the summer of 1966. The riot was triggered by an incident of alleged police brutality, but it was clear to many observers that the real causes of the riot ran much deeper. The city was, and still is, one of the most flagrantly segregated in the Nation. Of Waterloo's 33 schools, only 11 have any Negro students. No Negroes attend the two high schools on the west side of the Cedar River.

Writing for the Newhouse News Service, reporter Derek Schoen has noted that "Waterloo's blacks are penned off from the white community just as surely as if they lived in Chicago's inner slums or in shanty towns on the edges of nearly every Deep South City." On the city's affluent West Side, he observes, "a black face is a rarity," while on the city's shabby, slum-ridden East Side "there is not a white face in sight."

The two societies which Waterloo created has put the policeman in an awkward position. West of the Cedar River he might be a proud representative of the forces of law and order, but east of the river he is frequently viewed as a "pig" or a mercenary in the white oppressor's army. His fears, his prejudices, and his sense of being alone in hostile territory do nothing to cement relations.

In any case, much of the riot aftermath-analysis centered on police relations in the ghetto community, and it wasn't long before the department came under fire for being lily-white. Accordingly, the department launched a modest minor-

ity recruitment campaign, which consisted of a series of special advertisements in the local newspaper and the placing of posters and applications in Clarence Fraser's ghetto-based barbershop. The results, over the past 3 years, can be quickly summed up:

Fewer than five black applicants per year;
Four black policemen hired;
A net gain of three black policemen.

If the recruitment program has been disappointing, the reasons are not hard to find. First, nearly all the black applicants flunked the written test. It is a short-form "intelligence" test, administered by the local Civil Service Commission, which purports to measure the prospect's capacity for logic, abstract concepts, word use, and spatial relationships. A perfect score is 150 and the lowest passing score is 90. According to civil service officials, some of the black police applicants scored below 40. (Copies of the test were not made available to this writer.) At present, Waterloo officials show no inclination to change the test or even to concede that it may be culturaly biased.

Second, those blacks who can pass the test and meet police eligiblity requirements are already employed and are frequently earning more than the police department's relatively low starting salary of $6,804. On the other hand, the police department has made no effort to analyze its black "market", or to focus its promotion on prime prospects. The recruitment campaign has been a buck-shot affair, as if all blacks were equally likely police prospects.

Third, the black community remains abidingly skeptical of the police department's intentions. "They just want to hire a few Uncle Toms to keep us from rioting again," a black militant has commented. And it is true that two of Waterloo's three black policemen have drawn ghetto assignments.

Police response to black skepticisms has been spotty but, on the whole, appears to be genuine. Two years ago Chief Wright publicly stated that if any double standard of law enforcement existed in Waterloo—one standard for blacks and another for whites—it would cease. The announcement helped to clear the post-riot atmosphere. In addition, the police have cooperated in a series of sensitivity sessions and seminars with the black community. But sensitivity sessions are delicate instruments: they can escalate into shouting and cursing sessions, in which case the police usually walk out, muttering that they don't have to take that sort of talk from anyone; or they can deteriorate into a drab, sterile discussion on brotherhood, in which case the blacks stop attending. Waterloo has had its share of both kinds.

Sensitivity sessions, of course, are no substitute for reform. The fastest way for the police department to gain the confidence of black people is through just and respectful treatment of ghetto residents accompanied by an affirmative recruitment program. Such a program would have to involve large elements of the black community, including all its leaders, and that is precisely what the police seem unwilling to concede. In fact, police officials like to pretend that the blacks have no spokesmen. They talk of "the so-called black leaders" who represent no one but themselves, and hint that the silent majority of blacks have nothing at all against the police.

This unrealistic attitude would seem to rule out meaningful recruitment

efforts, for it has the effect of insulting the black community through contempt for its leaders. Decent recruitment must begin with good faith negotiations between the police and the black community.

Denver

"We're doing everything we possibly can do."
—a police personnel officer

In the past 2 years Denver businesses and media have contributed more than a quarter of a million dollars in time and talent in an effort to help the police department recruit more Negroes and Mexican Americans. The results have been either dramatically successful or plainly disastrous, depending upon whom one talks to.

The figures are clear enough: In 1967 the department had approximately 20 Negroes and 20 Mexican Americans. Today the figures are 40 apiece, out of a total force of 1,007. In other words, minority representation has doubled; yet blacks and Mexican Americans comprise only 8 percent of the force while making up 21 percent of Denver's population.

What strikes one first about Denver's recruitment program is its technical sophistication. The ads, which appeared on television, over radio, and in all local newspapers, have been slick and professional. Here is copy for a typical radio "spot" which ran last year:

YOUNG WOMAN, BLACK: How do *I feel* about my husband being a cop? Proud. Even if some of our friends are a little put out about it. Gus is a COLLEGE man now. Going to Metro. He'll have a degree in Police Science some day soon. And he only pays 10 percent of his own tuition.

ANNCR: Be somebody. Be a cop. Pay starts at $550 a month. Apply at Denver Police Headquarters downtown, or at any neighborhood substation.

A white civil service official has remarked: "All these special promotion campaigns aren't worth a damn. You attract Negroes the same way you attract whites—with a classified ad in the employment section of the newspaper."

On the other hand, neither that official nor anyone else connected with minority recruitment has consulted in any systematic fashion with representatives of the black and Spanish-speaking communities. Such consultation would appear to be an essential first step, since ghetto mistrust of policemen is far too deep and widespread to be overcome either by want ads or by a slick TV campaign prepared by a white advertising agency with a white sociologist as its consultant. Some of Denver's black policemen have been beaten up in the ghetto, and others have requested assignments far from their old neighborhoods. There is, in fact, a growing schism between the police force and the ghetto community. "There's cop brutality every day down here," according to a *moderate* Mexican American spokesman. "The kids hate the cops. How can you expect a kid to be a policeman when all he's ever seen a policeman do is bust somebody's head open?"

Such accusations seem to puzzle the police. "We never used to have any trouble with our minorities," says Chief George Seaton. "It's the few militants who stir things up." His viewpoint, in short, is identical to that of police officials in Waterloo and elsewhere. It can be summarized as follows: Militant leaders do not represent the rank-and-file for whom they claim to speak; therefore, there is no truth to the charges of police brutality which these leaders keep making.

Denver police officials make the usual disclaimers about brutality and harassment, insisting that there are always "one or two rotten apples for every barrel", and that nearly all Denver policemen are good apples. These denials, in the face of daily ghetto experience, do nothing to strengthen the credibility of the minority recruitment program among blacks and browns. Another moderate Mexican American leader has noted: "I wouldn't advise a young man in our community to join the police force, because he'd be hired to beat and kill his own people."

Whatever the merits of his case, it is clear that these are as commonly held attitudes in the Denver barrios as they are in the ghettos throughout America. The result is considerable black and brown skepticism about the sincerity of police hiring intentions and, in turn, considerable police cynicism about the ambitions, capabilities, and overall "desire to work" among young ghetto residents.

In the light of all this, it is rather astonishing that so many minority group members have responded to the advertisements and announced their intention of becoming policemen. No doubt if a way could be found to accept even half of these, the problem would be on its way toward solution. In point of fact, only a small fraction of the applicants ever become policemen.

Only about one-third of minority group applicants pass the written test, as compared to three-fourths of the white applicants. In addition, many blacks and Chicanos are eliminated by the background investigations—for such matters as bad debts, marital problems, and criminal records. In 1968, 148 new officers were appointed. Only six were Negro, 11 were Mexican American and 131 were Anglo. Clearly little progress will be made unless the department either alters its set of qualifications—an unthinkable notion to most policemen—or else finds a way of reaching more qualified minority group members. To an outsider it would seem logical for police officials to get together with ghetto representatives and try to work out a recruiting *modus vivendi*. But to many insiders this idea seems fantastic. "You can't talk to these people," observes a highly placed police official. The message has reached the black community. "The cops don't want to talk to us," says a black leader. "They're afraid we'll tell them how to succeed and that's the last thing they want to hear".

On the other hand, many Denver police officials are groping for successful ways to recruit blacks and Mexican Americans. In response to Mexican American protest, the height requirement has been lowered an inch (to 5′ 7″); some effort has been made to recruit blacks finishing up their hitch in the military service; and that old standby, the sensitivity sessions between blacks and whites, has been attempted.

But none of these measures has helped much. Police recruitment visits to air bases, for example, merely confirmed the policeman's view that blacks are

unapproachable. "We had six Negro men in the room," one of the white recruiters remembers, "and we told them the whole story about how they could become policemen. When we finished talking, they all walked out. One of them, a guy who'd been in Vietnam, said to me, 'Hell, I already fought one white man's war; I sure ain't about to fight another one'."

As for the sensitivity sessions, according to one of the white participants: "All it turned into was a shouting match. That confrontation stuff is a bunch of crap. It just makes the gap wider".

Denver, then, may be reaching a dead end in its current 2-year-old minority recruitment program. The problems it faces are in many ways typical of the other cities' problems: a polarization between the ghetto and police; a failure to consult minority citizens in planning the recruitment campaigns; a system of testing which seems to penalize minority applicants; and a general feeling of frustration and helplessness among the police leadership. "It'll take a century to solve this," says Chief Seaton.

Miami

"We're suffering from a kind of social hangover."
—a black policeman.

The hangover in the Miami Police Department comes from years of segregation. It wasn't until 1963 that the department swore off—abolishing its all-black district and attempting to integrate its 65 black policemen into the main force. Until that time no black man had been allowed to attend the police training academy and all blacks were given the rank of "patrolman", one notch below the lowest white rank of "officer". The opportunities for black policemen have improved considerably. There are now four black sergeants and two black lieutenants on the force.

Like so many other urban police departments, Miami's got into the minority recruitment business in response to ghetto violence. The disturbance occurred in August 1968, during the Republican National Convention in Miami. Miami's response, in part, was to inaugurate "Operation Badge", a sophisticated, one-shot campagin that relied heavily on posters, brochures, newspaper advertising, and recruitmobiles in the ghetto.

The appeal was direct and without frills. "The City of Miami," said a brochure, "is a major city in the nation with a high influx of people from throughout the world. The black community comprises a large percentage of the City's population.

" 'Operation Badge' is a direct campaign designed to interest more members of the black community in becoming officers of the Miami Police Department. A Department whose members are widely representative of the community it serves can provide a finer degree of professional service to all citizens."

The mobile units—which bore the message, "STOP! LET'S TALK!"—were also used as complaint centers, affording ghetto residents an opportunity to cite instances of harassment or other kinds of humiliations at the hands of policemen. While the complainant waited, a policeman with a telephone in the mobile unit began checking out the complaint. The entire compaign was clearly in-

tended to inspire ghetto confidence in the police department. "There was a period after the riot," notes a city hall official, "when cops wouldn't dare make an arrest in certain parts of the ghetto. The black community and the police were at sword's points."

Everyone agrees that the climate nowadays has improved. Complaints of police brutality have dropped sharply. "Operation Badge shifted the reaction," the official says. "It drew off the poison."

It also attracted quite a few black applicants, an average of 12 each week during the first 9 months of the campaign. Yet during the same period only nine black applicants succeeded in joining the force. Today about 70 out of 700 policemen are black and perhaps another 30 are Cuban. Together they comprise about 14 percent of the police force compared to 45 percent of the city's population.

Because no one has kept track of the black applicants, no one can say precisely at what stages in the hiring process they tend to drop out. In the absence of this vital information, speculation is risky. There is little doubt, however, that many blacks fail the written test and many others are unable to pass the 100-yard swimming test. In addition, there is speculation that the medical examination eliminates a disproportionate number of blacks.

In any case, it seems clear that the recruitment program has not paid off in many new recruits, although it has been effective as a "cooling" device in the ghetto. At present black and Cuban applications are falling off markedly. One of the reasons is growing doubt among minority members as to the sincerity of the department's intentions. "They came in here and beat the drum for Negro recruits," a black journalist remarked, "and when the guys responded they were kicked in the teeth."

Another reason is continuing tension between the police and ghetto residents. Chief Bernard L. Garmire and his staff are trying hard to ease the tension through an expanded community relations program focused on the high schools and also through a series of in-service seminars aimed at making policemen more sensitive to the needs of ghetto residents—but the going is rough and the progress hard to discern. "Look," complained a white policeman recently exposed to an in-service seminar on race relations, "they keep telling me to act like a public relations man out there. Next thing, they'll want me to carry candy cane in my holster."

Washington, D.C.

"We believe it can be done, and we have begun to do it."

—James Murray, head of the police department personnel division

Washington's 4,100-man police force is now 30 percent black and 70 percent white—exactly the reverse of the city's population. In the past year the proportion of blacks has been steadily increasing. Each month now more blacks than whites join the force, compared to the 1969 recruiting ratio of 43 percent black, 57 percent white.

In its efforts to reverse the ratio, the Washington police department has a lot of things going for it:

a fast-growing police force which makes it necessary to recruit 1,000 new men in a single year;

a wide-ranging recruiting force of 99 men and women;

a sufficient number of black men on the force to assure new black prospects they will not be alone;

a sizable black middle class in the city from which to draw; and

comparatively convenient access to special Federal funds for recruitment programs.

The key to Washington's relative success in minority recruitment is that it is a continuing program rather than a temporary, one-shot crusade. This affords the staff considerably more flexibility than most recruitment divisions enjoy. New techniques and territories can be tested on something less than a do-or-die basis. For example, the staff makes use of most of the usual devices—the mobile units, the publicity channels, and the like—but, more significantly, it seeks to build bases of support within the black community. Personnel officials, in fact, are convinced that the minority neighborhood should do its own recruiting in cooperation with the police department. Accordingly, they have helped a coalition of neighborhood organizations in the Adams-Morgan section of Washington to obtain funds from the U.S. Department of Labor for the purpose of recruiting black policemen from the neighborhood. The hope is that some of the new recruits will be assigned to beats in the Adams-Morgan community.

"We don't know if this is going to work," says Cheryl McMillon, a resident of Adams-Morgan, "but I'm pretty sure we can convince enough qualified people. Our argument is very simple: 'If you think the police force is bad, get in there and change it.' "

While focusing a portion of its recruiting efforts on black community organizations in the District, officials have covered their bet by sending recruiters into cities throughout the United States in search of black prospects. Results have been encouraging. For reasons that no one completely understands, out-of-town black applicants pass the written test more frequently than do Washington blacks. During the first 3½ months of 1970, for example, the differences were remarkable:

	Out-of-Town Blacks	*Washington Blacks*
Took Test	410	800
Passed Test	234	299

Despite these successes, the written test, which is administered by the District's Civil Service Commission, continues to be a major barrier to minority recruitment. Testing in police recruitmobiles, for example, invarably eliminates more blacks than whites. Here are the figures for recruitmobile testing from July 1968 through June 1969:

	Blacks	*Whites*
Took Test	2,085	1,001
Passed Test	970	850

In other words, 85 percent of the white applicants passed the test, as opposed to only 47 percent of the black applicants. Clearly, if such experiments as the Adams-Morgan recruiting effort are to succeed, and if blacks are to have any confidence in the proceedings, the written test will have to be revised. Civil Service officials say they are doing just that, but it remains to be seen whether the new test will be any fairer to blacks than the present test is.

The two men most responsible for the upswing in Washington's black recruitment are Police Chief Jerry J. Wilson and Personnel Director James M. Murray. Both are firmly committed to affirmative minority recruitment and both think it can be accomplished without impairing standards. "The heart of the matter," says Murray, "is sincere intent." Irene Mee, a consultant to the police department in minority recruitment, has observed: "The police department knows it must change its image among black people. But the best way to change its image is to change its ratio of black and white policemen—to more closely reflect the city's makeup."

State Police and Fire Departments

Both the municipal fire departments and the State police departments we visited lag far behind urban police in minority recruitment practices. Some reasons readily come to mind. First, these organizations have no pressing manpower needs, and recruitment of *anyone*, be he white or black, is often considered a waste of time and money. City fire departments and State police departments have few vacancies and long waiting lists.

Second, few fire departments or State police forces are in the center of the social storm that has recently baffled and buffeted urban police departments. They are under no special pressures from the minority community; and politices being what it is, no pressure usually means no reforms.

Third, employment with the State police entails a shift in locale for the recruit. Minority group members may be reluctant to tear up their roots and risk rejection by a new, strange community.

It is not surprising, then, that only one of the fire departments we visited—the one in Los Angeles County—has launched an affirmative minority recruitment program. And with the exception of Washington, the minority representation in these fire departments is well below 10 percent. (Washington has about 185 black firemen in a force of 1,500).

State police departments present a similar picture: only a handful of minority members were found to be troopers in California, Michigan, and Connecticut. Both Connecticut and Michigan, however, have attempted minority recruitment programs.

Michigan

In 1968, the Michigan State Police Department undertook an experiment in recruiting: the department waived the written test as a qualification. On the face of it, the experiment gave every promise of success; the test was held to be the main source of discouragement to potential black recruits, preventing many from applying for the job and rejecting nearly all of those who did apply. During the fiscal year, 1967–68, for example (before the no-test experiment began), 1,661 white applicants and 73 black applicants took the written test. Thirteen blacks passed, compared with 751 whites. In other words, 45 percent of the whites passed the test, as opposed to only 18 percent of the blacks.

The news that Michigan's police force was temporarily waiving the Civil Service test requirement was well publicized throughout the State and the

department was flooded with applications. The first batch of 469 applicants included 80 blacks, a considerable improvement over the customary ratio. But when the complicated screening process had worked its will, only 11 blacks survived to be admitted into the training school, compared to 130 whites. And only three blacks were graduated! (The training academy regularly flunks out 50 percent of its students, but during the no-test experiement the figure shot up to 70 percent. In some measure, then, the written test does predict performance in the training academy.) The various steps in the screening process seem to have worked a disproportionate hardship on black applicants. About one-seventh of the blacks versus one-twentieth of the whites, were rejected for arrest and traffic records. Background and character investigations eliminated 10 percent of the blacks and only 2 percent of the whites.

In the end, Michigan was able to add only five blacks to its State police force —its present minority total.

This disappointing experiment suggests that the written test is not the only barrier to minority recruitment and hiring. If police departments revised or eliminated their tests, would minority members be any better off? The Michigan results tempt one to answer no. Yet the picture is not all that clear. Michigan's standards seem considerably sterner in some respects than those of many other police departments. Few police academies, for example, flunk out 50 percent of their trainees. Then, too, although the special program attracted more blacks than usual, it did not attract anywhere near the number of blacks who regularly apply to urban police departments.

One point, however, seems clear enough: waiving the test, which only predicts an applicant's performance in the police academy, simply postpones the day of reckoning. It is probably more merciful for the applicant to flunk the test forthwith than to flunk out of the academy 6 months later. The question remains: does the academy curriculum teach the essential police skills? Is it truly a training device or merely a screening device?

Connecticut

Connecticut has an 883-man State police force; six of them are black or Puerto Rican.

In 1968, Connecticut decided to tackle the written test problem. It obtained a $28,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Labor with which to give police prospects pretest training. The program was advertised in all major cities, and the State police commissioner, who is a director of the Hartford Urban League, made personal visits to many communities in an effort to drum up applicants for the 6-week course. Ultimately, only five blacks signed up. ("There is a lack of desire of these people to participate," concluded a high-ranking State police official. " . . . They don't want to enforce the laws against their own race.")

Of the five who signed up for the course, only two finally passed the Civil Service test, and one of these was dropped from the force during his probationary period. Thus the net gain was one black trooper, at a recruiting cost of $28,000 per man.

There are several reasons why the program failed. In the first place, it was conceived as a one-shot campaign—a kind of sink-or-swim effort to attract black applicants—and it should be clear by now that it will take more than a single

campaign to overcome black fear, distrust, and timidity generated by a century of segregation. The fact that there has been no follow-up program, no real effort on the part of State officials to diagnose the failure, is sufficient evidence to confirm the black community in its skepticism. "We do not keep ethnic figures," explained a Civil Service official, "but we do have a unit which handles the underprivileged, which is beginning to keep those statistics."

Secondly, minority members may be suspicious of a special program that implies they are somehow disadvantaged. "People who get into one of these special programs," notes Louise Smith, the State's only black policewoman, "have a stigma thrown in their face. They'd prefer to come on the right way. It has to be kept a secret from the rest of the men that some people got in through a special program; otherwise the sacrifice is too great."

Third, the efficacy of the pretest training was doubtful. For some reason, Civil Service officials refused to supply trainers with any tests which the Civil Service department had used in previous years.

It would seem reasonable to conclude from both the Connecticut and Michigan experiences that unsuccessful special recruitment programs often create new problems. Programs that fail tend both to increase disillusionment within the minority community and to bring about a sort of social paralysis within the police department. In Connecticut's most recent group of trooper recruits, for example, the ethnic figures were eloquent: 146 whites, no blacks.

California

As noted earlier, the California State Patrol has made no special efforts to recruit minority members. In fact, State personnel officials say they have no idea how many minority members are currently on the force. The consensus is: not many.

By way of contrast, the California Department of Corrections, under the directorship of R.K. Procunier, last year announced it was embarking upon "an affirmative action program" in recruitment. Procunier directed each of the State's 15 penal institutions to develop a recruitment action plan. "Our current efforts," he declared in a memorandum to wardens and superintendents, "must be directed toward actively seeking out minority recruits and encouraging job retention by creating a realistic climate for equal opportunity in the Department of Corrections."

He then proceeded to issue recruitment goals to each institution (annual 5 percent increases in minority representation), to call for monthly progress reports, and to appoint a deputy to supervise and watch over the entire process. The monthly reports were to include the following information:

> First-of-month total staff: Caucasians, Negroes, Mexican Americans, others;
>
> Employee movement during the month showing the name and position of all employees whom we have hired, transferred, promoted . . . or otherwise separated; and
>
> A brief narrative on every employment complaint which has racial implications.

The corrections department employs nearly 7,000 persons, and close to 90 percent of them are white, as opposed to about half the inmates. In the year preceding Procunier's affirmative action policy, minority representation in the corrections department increased by 44 persons. In the first 6 months following the new policy, there was a net gain of 84 minority members—nearly twice as many in half the time.

The Los Angeles County Fire Department

In the spring of 1969 Los Angeles County Supervisor Kenneth Hahn publicly voiced concern over the fact that not a single Negro was on the county fire department's latest eligibility list as certified by the Civil Service Commission. He noted that the previous summer only 14 blacks as against 673 whites had filed for jobs in the county fire department and that not a single black had made it through the screening process. "The statistics clearly indicate that somewhere the civil service procedures are in error," Hahn said.

Deciding to correct the error, the county board of supervisors hired a black consulting firm—Cunningham-Short & Associates, Inc.—which made a series of recommendations for an affirmative action program. Chief among these was a stepped up publicity campaign in ghetto neighborhoods. County personnel recruiters distributed bulletins and brochures—in both English and Spanish—to neighborhood organizations, ran advertisements over radio and television, established a recruiting booth at the Watts festival and, in general, spread the word throughout ghettos and barrios that the county fire department was ready to hire blacks and Chicanos.

In addition the written test was adjusted to "reduce the amount of verbalization", cutting down on the number of word problems, and simplifying the instructions. The results of the campaign were typical. More than 400 blacks submitted applications (an astounding increase over previous years), along with 126 Spanish Americans, 1,332 whites, and seven persons of other extractions. The total of minority applicants was 548. Of these, only 18 (3 percent) ended up in the "first rankings" of the eligibility list—that is, near enough the top of the list to stand a good chance of being hired. Whites who made "first ranking" totaled 118, or 9 percent of the white applicants.

The screening process was plainly rough on all groups, but somewhat rougher on minorities. Both the written test and the ability test eliminated a higher proportion of minority members than whites. The most astonishing drop-off, however, came near the beginning when 158 blacks and 97 Spanish Americans failed to show for the written test. "Our desire to hire minorities was not believed," notes a county personnel official, explaining the drop-off. "There are only five Negroes in the department and none in the supervisory position. Naturally the Negro community is skeptical."

The Los Angeles County experiment can hardly be described as successful, but it is notable for having been tried at all, and for what it has taught county officials. Unfortunately, it has underscored opposition from some white firemen who fear "reverse bias" and who have been accustomed over the years to sponsoring their sons and nephews as new firemen. "In some ways a fire

department is like a club," notes a county personnel official. "You go into it because lots of people you know are already there. It's a big family."

Family members tend to be loyal to one another. During one of the physical ability testing sessions, a white fireman standing in the back of the room gazed for a moment at the many applicants—white and black and brown—scrambling up ladders. Then he remarked to his white campanion: "I hope our side wins." It is part of America's current agony that men dedicated to the protection of their fellow citizens' lives and property think it necessary to choose up sides.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The following conclusions and recommendations are not intended as inflexible guidelines but as general approaches which local governments might wish to consider. Implicit in these suggestions are a number of hopeful assumptions: first, that municipal governments and local police and fire officials are genuinely committed to minority police recruitment, not as a marginal program to allay ghetto unrest but as a major priority to satisfy our national obligations; second, that officials will come to realize that successful minority recruitment must lead to a number of structural changes in the hiring process—especially in the testing of applicants and the training of recruits; third, that local leaders will view the problem in both short-range and long-range terms, looking for good results from current programs but not surrendering to despair or cynicism when results are disappointing; and fourth, that police departments will continue to expand for at least the foreseeable future, thus affording them a golden opportunity—perhaps their last—to make peace with the blacks, the browns, and themselves.

Finding the Right Approach

1. Special one-shot minority recruitment campaigns, mounted independently of the police department's ongoing recruiting program, tend to be ineffective and disillusioning to the minority community. They also tend to mislead the white community, which mistakenly assumes that much is being accomplished in the way of minority recruitment.

The need is not necessarily for new campaigns but for new policies which commit city and State police forces to continuing affirmative hiring goals and procedures.

2. Police departments and Civil Service Commissions that do not take the trouble to compile ethnic statistics have no way of measuring the success or failure of their minority recruitment programs. One must assume that a failure to keep count is tantamount to a failure to care. Certainly the ghetto communities would take such a view.

3. Recruitment advertising campaigns are generally well organized, but minority group leaders are seldom consulted in advance as to the proper appeals and presentations. The path to successful minority recruitment starts in the

ghetto community; minority leaders should have a strong voice in preparing recruitment campaigns and in shaping recruitment policies. Washington's experiment with the Adams-Morgan community is a fresh and hopeful approach.

4. Minority recruitment efforts can hardly be expected to succeed so long as a black or brown man views the police force as an enemy of his people, and therefore, views his joining that force as a betrayal of his brothers. Police officials tend to see this as an "image" problem. In fact, it is a fundamental problem of justice. Seminars and workshops purporting to teach "human relations" may help a little, but real reform will come only when top municipal and police officials make it clear they will not tolerate police brutality or harassment. The rules should be clear, the punishment should be swift.

5. One way to start building minority-group confidence in the police is to call a conference in each city (or State) of police officials, ghetto community leaders, and other interested parties. It should be a planning conference aimed at designing genuine minority recruitment policies and techniques. The conference should have representation from *all* important elements in the black or Spanish American communities, including those militant elements which police officials normally shun.

6. There is no general agreement among police departments as to the precise nature of the minority recruitment "market"—that is, which blacks and Spanish-speaking men constitute the best prospects for recruitment. The range of opinion and confusion is obvious when the same police recruiting agency sends recruitmobiles down the ghetto's main street, to the unemployment office, to factory gates, and to colleges. We still have much to learn about the characteristics of prospective black and Spanish American policemen, and at present no one seems to be looking into the matter. Police departments anxious to recruit minority members might well undertake a census analysis of the target community. Recruiters do not know, for example, how many blacks in the recruit age-range live in a given metropolitan area; how many of these are high school graduates; how many are employed and at what salaries. These are basic demographic questions to which any wise business firm would want answers before embarking on an advertising campaign.

In addition, most police departments continue to concentrate on white prospects, simply because they are easier to attract and more of them get through the elaborate screening process. This may make sense from a dollar standpoint but it makes no sense at all from the standpoint of equal employment opportunities. Police departments will find it worth the price to put a larger share of each recruiting dollar into ghetto communities.

7. None of the State police forces studies has begun seriously to recruit minority members, all claims to the contrary notwithstanding. The task is complicated by the huge waiting lists of applicants [mostly white] and by an unwillingness of many blacks to leave their local communities. In short, State police forces will require a long-range approach to minority recruitment demands, as opposed to the ad hoc, or one-shot, approach which they have recently employed. At this stage, the need is for planning.

8. Fire departmens for the most part appear to be making little effort to recruit minority members. The prospects for improvement are dim, since the waiting lists are long and the rate of personnel expansion generally slow.

Progress may come if and when blacks press for specific employment goals, as they have done with some success in the building trades.

Surmounting the Hurdles

9. The traditional process of screening, testing, and training police applicants and recruits needs to be thoroughly overhauled—first, because it presently places a heavy burden upon blacks and Spanish-speaking Americans; and second, because there seems to be no demonstrable evidence that the system either brings in the best men for the job or teaches them the right combination of skills. We are not recommending that police departments "lower their standards"; on the contrary, we recommend that they raise standards in accord with contemporary public needs. And one of those needs is for more minority member policemen.

10. The basic written test eliminates more minority police applicants than any other single step along the way. The tests vary from city to city, but nearly all claim to measure a man's intelligence. These tests are clearly culturally biased and they should be modified as quickly as possible. No one knows precisely what they test or how well they predict a recruit's future performance on the job.

Failing this, cities and States have an obligation to provide pretest training for all applicants, especially those from minority groups. This obligation stems directly from the recruitment process. As soon as a police department embarks upon a campaign which attracts hundreds of black applicants, it must face up to the problems of the 60 to 90 percent whom the test consistently rejects.

11. If the test predicts anything, it may be the recruit's performance in the police training academy. But one of the prime aims of the academies, it appears, is to instill a paramilitary *esprit* among the recruits. Little or no allowances are made for the black man or the Mexican American who finds himself alone in this most rigorous of white worlds. Moreover, there appears to be only a tenuous connection between much of the training a recruit gets and the skills he will need as a policeman. We therefore recommend:

(a) a revision of standard academy curriculum and climate, beginning with an analysis of the kinds of jobs a policeman must perform and the skills he needs to perform them competently;
(b) the hiring of black and Spanish American teachers; and
(c) a counseling program for all trainees, with special emphasis on minority member trainees.

12. Some of the more marginal eligibility qualifications penalize minority applicants and could be eliminated without undue threat to law and order. Specifically, some police forces demand a minimum swimming proficiency. There is no reason why swimming cannot be taught at the training academy, along with everything else. Similarly, all police departments insist that the recruit know how to drive, although many ghetto youths have never had the opportunity to learn. This, too, could be taught at the academy. The training period might also be lengthened for some applicants, both to allow for additional courses and to give recruits a chance to pass standard courses that are causing them trouble. The time spans of police academy training programs vary from city to city

by as much as 6 weeks; there is no reason why they should not also vary from applicant to applicant, depending upon his needs.

13. Many minority applicants drop out of the race before taking the test—in some cases even before filling out the application. The applicant's initial encounter with the recruiter appears to be crucial. It would be helpful if police departments employed professional counselors to interview applicants at this early stage—not to screen them out but to encourage them to stay in.

14. Here are some changes that can be made quickly:

(a) Those police departments which have not assigned blacks and/or Mexican Americans to places on oral interview boards should do so. All-white interview boards do nothing to close the credibility gap between police and minority citizens.

(b) The family interview—used frequently in background investigations—should either be modified or abandoned. The interviewers are usually white, and some of the traits they look for—neatness, articulateness, enthusiasm—may be hard to come by in low-income households. A man who moonlights, for instance, may be too weary to please the interviewer.

(c) Medical standards which merely lower the city's liability risk, but do nothing to improve the quality of policemen, should be revised. Some of these standards may penalize applicants who have grown up in urban ghettos where health services are often inadequate.

(d) The height minimum should be lowered or eliminated. It is viewed by many Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Oriental Americans as discriminatory. Yet, no one has ever made a convincing case for the proposition that a short man makes a bad policeman.

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